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THIS WEEK

Week by Week 583

Ritual and Drama
by William F. Lynch 586

Night Fear: A Poem
by Denis Kelly 588

The Felicity of J. D. Salinger
by Josephine Jacobsen 589

Segregated Shakespeare
by N. Bryllion Fagin 591

Intellectuals and the Church—I
by John Cogley 593

The Screen
by Philip T. Hartung 594

Communications 595

Critics' Choices 599

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

ART AND SOCIETY

THE RECENT publication of an article by a young Russian writer serves to remind us of an important truth: it is far easier to assert that the relationship between art and society is significant than it is to demonstrate closely what the relationship is. But the difficulty does not invalidate the assertion; it merely means that the demonstration, however difficult, is all the more necessary, all the more rewarding.

This article, entitled "On Socialist Realism," has not yet appeared in Russia. The author managed to get it out of Russia to France, where a French translation was published in *Esprit,* the journal founded by Emmanuel Mounier and now continued by Jean-Marie Domenach. In this country the article, translated from the Russian by George Dennis, has now appeared in the Winter issue of *Dissent.* In a brief introduction to the article Mr. Dennis says: "It might help American readers to understand the outlook of the author if they recalled how Swift, savagely lashing out against the English Ascendancy in Ireland, remained part of that Ascendancy. Our author has freed one of his feet from Communism. He uses it to kick Communism and some of his kicks are pretty hard. But his other foot is still stuck in Communism—and stuck fast."

The author who comments on socialist realism, the prescribed "basic method of Soviet literature and literary criticism," is clearly a Communist and committed to the tenets and goals of Communism. He accepts, thus, not only the official definition of socialist realism but its goals as well: "It demands from the artist a truthful and historically concrete representation of reality in its revolutionary developments. Moreover, the truthfulness and historical concreteness of the artistic representation of reality must be linked with the task of ideological transformation and education of workers in the spirit of socialism."

BUT IF THE writer is committed to this formula, so dreary to those who find it alien, it is commitment with a difference—a difference which allows him to employ a critical irony. He can write of the Communists who followed their great Purpose: "So that prisons should vanish forever we built new prisons. So that all frontiers should fall, we surrounded ourselves with a Chinese wall. So that work should become a rest and a pleasure, we introduced forced labor. So that not one drop of blood be shed any more, we killed and killed and killed." Lest anyone think that such harsh criticism is made to the advantage of other goals, he reminds his readers that achievements are always short of the original aim and that present-day Communism "resembles our aspirations about as much as the Middle Ages resembled Christ, [and] modern Western man resembles the free superman. . . ."

After a rapid critical survey of the best and the most popular Russian writers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, he comes to a melancholy conclusion. "Since the writers accepted socialist realism en masse—the beginning of the thirties—literature has gone down and down. Some few glimmers of light during the Patriotic War did not save it."

The writer's analytic path from the acceptance of socialist realism to the conclusion that it has proved an artistic failure is neither simple nor straightforward. Nor can the argument which he puts forth be used to bludgeon too readily the Communist imposition of artistic rules. For it is a live and elusive argument and the unwary, at least, are likely to find it turned against their own critical and artistic positions.

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Anyone who has concerned himself with the relation between art and morality, literature and belief, religion and the artist, will have encountered formulations and criticisms surprisingly like those used by this Russian writer. With due consideration for the all-important differences between Catholicism and Communism, it is fair to say that these criticisms and concepts resemble not only those employed by Catholic artists and critics but also those which are levied against the Catholic artist.

In each case the artist is viewed with suspicion—and rightly so from the view of conventional society. For he is too likely to prove subversive, to be critical of the gap between what is and what is said to be, too likely to uncover the bone beneath the skin, the reality behind the appearance. If the beliefs to which one is committed correspond to reality they can only profit from the artist who periodically pierces their conventional presentation. If they do not, they are likely to be weakened with every criticism, whether the criticism is intended to damage or not. "On Socialist Realism" represents those explosive artistic forces that may destroy more than the conventional foolishness of Communist theories about art and society.

CARDINAL STEPINAC

IT IS probably not realized generally in the United States to what extent the late Cardinal Stepinac of Zagreb stood out as a symbol of religious protest against totalitarian tyranny. For this there are several main reasons. Ever since Marshal Tito had a falling out with the Kremlin a decade ago and turned to the West, he has seemed somehow to be less of a dictator.

At the same time the historical role of Cardinal Stepinac has been obscured by the charges that sought to identify him with another variety of totalitarianism—that of the separatist State of Croatia set up by the Nazis during World War II. The war crimes and reprisals committed under the Pavelic puppet-government did indeed intensify gravely an antagonism between the Serb and Croat peoples that had lasted for centuries. By staging a Moscow-like trial and accusing Archbishop Stepinac of a share in such atrocities, the Tito regime was able to arouse these violent feelings once more and direct them against the accused.

At the end of the war in Europe there were indications that Marshal Tito had hopes of securing the collaboration of Archbishop Stepinac. But the struggle between Church and totalitarian state was not long in becoming manifest. In the very first year Tito launched a determined effort to indoctrinate the youth of the land with a Marxian outlook, and Archbishop Stepinac's pastoral letter of September, 1945, read in all the Catholic churches of Yugoslavia, vigorously protested against the Sovietization of Yugoslav life. From then on the die was cast.

At the time of the Archbishop's trial and his long sentence to hard labor in 1946, Yugoslavia was still counted among the Soviet Union's satellites in Eastern Europe. So the trial and sentence must be viewed in this context.

After he became a dissident, Tito found himself at continued enmity with Archbishop Stepinac. When the prelate was released on parole in 1951, it was with the understanding that he would not be permitted to exercise any more episcopal authority in Yugoslavia; he returned to his native village, where he served as a simple parish priest until his death. His designation as a Cardinal by Pius XII in 1952 led Tito to break off diplomatic relations with the Vatican, nor was the Archbishop permitted to leave for Rome to receive his robes of office.

Even at his death the Yugoslav government at first forbade a funeral at Zagreb. Later it relented, and the prelate's body was brought to the cathedral there. Church authorities in Zagreb warned the populace against organizing any demonstrations. But as the body lay there in state before the cathedral's high altar, men and women came by the thousands to pay him tribute. And they wept. The depth of their emotion bears witness to the stature of Cardinal Stepinac as a priest, a bishop and a national leader.

YOUTH MUST BE SERVED

THE LUNCH counter sitdown-protest by Negroes continues to attract attention. The protest began in North Carolina against stores which refuse to permit Negroes to sit at their lunch counters, but it quickly spread to scattered localities in South Carolina, Virginia and Florida, and now includes a certain amount of sympathetic picketing here in New York. Most of the Southern demonstrators are Negro students; their technique of a sitdown at lunch counters might be termed a response to a stand-up policy, for they are protesting a policy that says Negroes can be served, but only if they stand at the counter.

All this is unsettling to many people, and not

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only white supremacists. Some Negro leaders and white Southerners who count themselves as sympathetic to interracial justice are said to be unhappy over the student demonstrations, fearing that they may stiffen resistance to Negro gains and upset carefully laid plans for step-by-step integration, better enforcement of the Supreme Court's ruling on school integration, and the like.

For our part, we can appreciate the concern over the situation by Negro leaders and sympathetic whites in the South. We too would normally argue against the dramatic gesture that usually accomplishes nothing in favor of the patient and quiet effort that leads even to small gains. In this case, though, our sympathies are with the students. Patience and moderation are required in the struggle for interracial justice, but the success of the bus boycott in Montgomery indicates that non-violent economic pressure has its own special place too. If it takes a non-violent mass movement to win the right to sit down at a lunch counter in order to eat a hotdog, we are certainly not going to tell Negro students in the South that they should continue to stand up and be patient.

CHANGED PROSPECT?

A STEADY, substantial decline in Wall Street prices has marked the first six weeks of this year, and the term "recession" is beginning to be voiced again for the first time in many months. Nineteenth-century confidence in continual progress has long since been exploded, and in some circles the feeling is growing that such pleasant optimism is not even justified in the case of our fabulous "growth" stocks. Here much depends, of course, on whether the lower market quotations simply reflect a realistic return from exaggerated prices, confidence that for a time inflation is in check, or a pessimistic outlook on next year's business.

So far the state of the national economy appears little changed. General employment continues high and with it consumer spending. Reports of most large American companies continue to show increased earnings. To balance this are an unemployment force of some four millions, considerable unused industrial capacity and some dips in farm prices—not to mention certain regions and industries that continue to be hard hit. And there is little improvement in respect to our inadequate public services, the neglect of which casts so large a shadow over current American prosperity. With reports of a growing decline, would not the tackling of certain community needs impart a useful momentum to the national economy?

SECOND THOUGHTS

TWO WEEKS AGO we commented on published reports that A.F.L.-C.I.O. leaders had tentatively agreed that disputes over organizational jurisdiction and job rights should be submitted to binding arbitration. But more recent word from the mid-winter meeting of the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s executive council indicates that reports of an end to jurisdictional disputes were at least premature and probably over-optimistic. Some leaders are quite unsatisfied with the plan, it is said, although the failure to reach an agreement is being euphemistically described as meaning that "some of the details still need to be worked out."

In any case, the executive council gave up any attempt to settle the problem at its recent session. Instead, the eight top officers of the A.F.L.-C.I.O. will meet soon with the special committee that has been working on the problem, in the hope that the enlarged group can make further progress. But official spokesmen were making no predictions as to when they hoped the issue would be resolved.

That all is far from peace and harmony in labor's house is indicated by renewal of the internal battle inside the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s Industrial Union Department. Here the name of James R. Hoffa figures prominently. Although the Teamsters were ousted from the A.F.L.-C.I.O., they are still in the Construction Industry Joint Conference, along with nineteen craft unions which are members of the A.F.L.-C.I.O. This situation led to a stormy session at the Florida meeting, during which Walter Reuther is said to have charged that the building trades unions were conspiring with Mr. Hoffa to "bust unions" all over the country. Before it was all over, harsh words were exchanged, tempers flared and the president of the Plumbers' union left the meeting by request, threatening to resign from the I.U.D. and to take his union out with him.

The details of all this, of course, would normally have limited interest to the outside observer. But they are of considerable interest if they are seen for what they are—indications that internal rivalries in the A.F.L.-C.I.O. top leadership continue, that the contest between industrial and craft unions persists despite the marriage of the two labor organizations, and that the end of jurisdictional disputes between rival unions may still be further away than it was hoped a few weeks ago.

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Ritual and Drama

The drive for ritual existence is one of the most powerful movements in the soul of man

by WILLIAM F. LYNCH

THE POSSIBILITY of the reappearance of some kind of religious and ritual drama in our civilization has been one of the constant if not one of the louder themes in our perennial conversations about the state of the theater. I admit that, things being what they have been, it is likely to be looked on by most people as a pretty abstract part of that conversation. But the drive toward common movement and ritual existence is one of the most powerful movements in the soul of man. If it is choked off and denied on the deepest and religious levels of existence, as indeed it has been, this drive toward ritual will concentrate the whole of itself on the most superficial levels of life, the immediately social, and will end in becoming an absolute, a stupid parody of itself and its own dignity.

The fact is that these needs for common movement and ritual come from inside of us and are not really being satisfied at the more vital points of the soul. Romantic rebellion is always the too obvious counter pole to the kind of cheap, overgrown ritualism which besieges us, but it is no solution; in fact it only intensifies the difficulty. It may well be and it is an observation, not a reproach—that it is the collapse of the idea of the Church in our civilization that has driven us into our present social rites. Ersatz ritual has necessarily been substituted for the real thing. But this process has taken place not only in the world of technology and the mass media; it is also terribly true for many developments within the contemporary literary imagination. The problems of the two levels are remarkably comparable.

One thing we may be sure of. The achievements and the distortions within man's search for common movement will go on to the end of time. And so will the conversation about and the work toward a religious and ritual theater. It will never happen with finality that we will say, and be fully satisfied in saying it, that ritualism was an early and primitive beginning for the theater in the West, that we now know too much, now feel too much, are now too human, have too great a burden of sophistication, to recover earlier situations. For what is primitive becomes, a generation later, the sophisticated, and what once seemed sophisticated is regarded as primitive.

WHAT IS not often enough noticed is that, historically, the simplest and earliest piece in the liturgical theater opening of the tenth century *(Quem Queritis)* was already surrounded by a context of symbolism, movement and architecture that had taken a thousand years of sophistication and toil for the West to produce. Now we have somewhat the opposite general situation: our plays are for the most part highly "sophisticated" pieces that appeal only to the "intellectual" areas of society but that could not possibly have a more miserable and more primitive context, architecturally and socially, within which to operate.

There is no general style of life, in the highest and best sense of that phrase, which the theater can call upon outside of itself as one of its natural resources. So far as real movement and manners are concerned our playwrights are completely on their own, for the simple but tragic reason that we too are on our own, unless indeed we wish to submit to the style that there be no ritual in life.

One wonders how often we now go to the theater (or the movies) to participate, at least mentally, in some common action with the dramatist, our hearts if not our bodies speaking a common language. It is probably truer that we now go to see how the other half lives, to study, look and laugh judiciously at other people.

Before considering some remarkable and recent formal explorations into religious theater, let me suggest a very beautiful and positive example of a non-formal act of the ritual imagination. It is a piece called

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"One-Eye" and occurred as one of the quartet of Mexican pictures called "Roots."

It is quite impossible to convey the magnificent work of the director of this picture, as noble a work as I, for one, have ever seen on the screen. One-Eye is a little lad with precisely that affliction. His mother is a Mexican woman with a face of beauty that derives from the mountains and from eternal faith. There are two little scenes that counterpoint each other early in the picture. In the one the lad, just because his affliction places him apart from his young friends, is subjected to their incredible ridicule. In the other a blind man is with complete reverence helped across the street.

The substance of the picture is the pursuit of a cure by the boy and his mother, through the medicine men and the shrines of the country. At last they come to the shrine of shrines of The Wise Men. And in the glorious external display of fireworks that there occurs, at the moment of the final beseeching of faith, the lad is blinded in his other eye by a passing rocket. The homeward trek begins. The boy pours out his hatred of life and tries to escape even from the mother—who is pouring forth her praise of the miracle. The miracle! For never again will men laugh at him, she says, and never again will he be alone. For all men love and revere those with *no* eyes.

I have never seen a finer cinematic moment than the beauty of the face of that boy as by indirection he discovers direction and the human community. Certainly the audience found it with him, in the deep liturgy of its own heart. Here there was no need of theory or thought. The action is the heart of the matter, the sure guide to feeling and thinking.

I DO NOT think that this is true of "He Who Must Die," the first of several recent religious or ritual dramas or movies that have made a notable impression on many people. My own reaction to this superb piece of craftsmanship was one both of admiration and deep uncertainty. It was more than a simple intellectual uncertainty. It belonged more to the whole body, which found it difficult to enter into the movement and the action, into this powerful modern parallel to the life and passion of Christ and his friends. The more I searched out the reasons for the uncertainty, in the picture itself, in *The Greek Passion,* the novel by Nikos Kazantzakis from which it was drawn, and in *The Odyssey: A Modern Sequel,* Kazantzakis' remarkable rendition of the Ulysses theme, the more confirmed I was that the collapse was in the work.

The action was being used to support the ideas, the two never quite coming together. And the ideas themselves were both brilliant and fraudulent, always giving the impression of having been composed and manipulated by a composer. The top of the head was in final command, and at that not ours but the writer's. The realism was powerful, but always black and white and therefore contrived. The real was manipulated in the name of superficial parallels to the Gospel story. In the name of Christ the immaculately "white" characters of the movie-book were always leaving the "black" characters, always desperately giving something up, abandoning it, leaving it, running, running, running.

The final clue, I think, for the movie and the novel, must come from the brilliant poem. The clue is Ulysses, for Christ and the good priest, and all their friends, are Ulysses, not the Greek Ulysses trying to find his valiant way home, but the new Ulysses creating the new ritual of no ritual at all, breaking away from every father and every home, even from hope, and finally even from freedom itself. In the end all things indeed come home again: but into the home of the head of Ulysses, whose head has created them all and receives them again, with compassion because even compassion is a fine idea.

The religious drama ends in the perfect parody of ritual, in the lonely head of Ulysses. It is the brilliant rite of Narcissus. Nobody else is there. This is one of the great temptations of the intellectual as he tries to create the new ritual drama. (O'Neill's "Mourning Becomes Electra" has a similar ending, whereas the Greek original, Aeschylus' "Oresteia," ends in a great public festival.)

WE ARE AGAIN made sharply aware of the modern sensibility in Archibald MacLeish's "J.B." One of the greatest obstacles to any possible effective restoration of Biblical-ritual drama among us is the constant insistence on the imposition of "modern sensibility" within the action. There is a good sense in which this can and must be done, but the project also has its fraudulent senses, especially when it means, rather apodictically, that we are what we are, we feel what we feel, and that is that and let no one raise any questions. This is historicism at its purest, and is nothing but a refined and intellectual form of the "most people" way of life. Sensibility, *our* sensibility, is so precious a commodity that everything gets used for its purposes and is to be reduced to its shape.

We have seen that exactly the opposite process goes on in "One-Eye"; the cart does not go before the horse. But once again, with Mr. MacLeish, the cart of sensibility and thought is way out in front of the horse of the action. If one wants an encyclopedia of the thoughts and systems of modern man, Jung, Bergson, Freud, Husserl, the existentialists, *The Golden Bough,* Joyce, Dostoevsky, Marx, he will find it all, to the point of parody, in the Ulysses-Christ of Kazantzakis. The same thing is true of "J.B.," though in a narrower and less competent way.

The air is oppressive with the thoughts and speculation of the author, who is using the story of Job as a

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vehicle. It is a new Job we are given, a thoroughly romantic one, as the critics have very rightly agreed. In the contest with God he turns out much more handsomely than God. Though nothing is left to him, there is Life and Love, a few leaves of forsythia, his wife, and the potential coals and fires of his own heart. Thus far we have on our hands the creative mind of Kazantzakis and the enduring, understanding heart of MacLeish, both pretty much alone. There is little room here for the choral dance or the choral song.

I do not intend to quarrel here with Mr. MacLeish about the question of God, who is doubtfully believed in but much talked with in this religious play. My concern is with the general assumption in the air that if "J.B." is not very good theology it does at least explore the human experience as the theologians do not. If this were true we could all be critically happy about the play, because it is a reasonable certainty that an art which really follows the lines of human experience will be following the lines of light and the Holy Spirit, and will willy-nilly get to God. Mr. MacLeish is a very reputable fighter for ideas and deserves respect, but in this case the ideas are too artificial to find a body.

That man is magnificently best in his worst moments, that *he* can love if Reality cannot, that light can come only from the coals of our own heart, that men will go endlessly on—these are "splendid" ideas, but they cannot get a grip on reality, and the only ritual they will ever evoke is the lonely movement of thought in the head of an isolated poetry. Even the language, therefore, gets tenuous and unsubstantial. Forsythias are not very much reality. Names like Mrs. Murphy and Mrs. Boticelli do not evoke real images, and surely neither of them is in the audience for such a play. There is a preciosity communicated even to the real things: "the time of the wild goats," "God the boiling point of water," "you know Muff, my purple poodle," "sticks and stones and steel are chances."

These "realities" mean something if and only if one knows what the writer is saying and thinking—and in the order of something that is almost pure argument. If one doesn't follow the argument—which is as likely as not—he will find the greatest difficulty in locating the lines of significance of Mrs. Murphy and Mrs. Boticelli, the forsythia, or death as "a bone that stammers . . . a tooth among the flints that has forgotten." Do not believe for a moment in the new dichotomy that has been offered to us: on the one hand a Christian theology that is transcendental and on the other hand a new poetic and non-theological experience that is in touch with reality.

The director of "One-Eye" has us dancing together in a great ritual before he ever asks us to think a thought, and by then our thoughts can take care of themselves. This is what makes me think that "J.B." should have begun where it ended, with an exploration of the love of Mr. and Mrs. J.B., to see if it has the actuality of love uncapitalized. Still, MacLeish is exploring in the right direction, away from the path of Ulysses. And he knows there can be something at the other side of the door.

IT IS NOT necessary to be complicated about this whole matter. Perhaps what I am saying is that we need a lot more dancing in common before we do any more thinking. We must begin to ask what makes a playwright and what his basic training should be.

Certainly he must make himself more than a "thinker," more even than a poet as the term is now understood. He should know a good deal, and this in terms of his own blood stream, about the dance and ritual in the oldest and widest senses of these terms. He should be a man who delights in the coronation of a queen or the inauguration of a president, who delights generally in a public style of life for man. He should know history and not think that his private mind can alone create a theater. He should be deeply aware of the eternal rhythms of the heart of the *people,* the strength these rhythms have for salvation (as they were caught, for example, at the end of "Cabiria"). He must come to an intimate knowledge of the work of the choreographers and the musicians, and not leave his own skills in isolation from theirs.

On the other hand the playwright, and the artist in general, has a very great contribution of his own to make to the ritual art of the people. It is his sensitivity that can prevent it from being rigid and mechanical, superficial or destructive.

But let us end where we began. We could very well end by borrowing a term from the psychologists. The term is that of *displacement*. By every instinct in them, men desperately need to think and move together, ritually. One of the sources of modern anxiety is surely that people get into too many situations in which they do not know what people will think or do next. If these ritual needs collapse on the deeper levels of the body and spirit, then they will break out (as they have) on cheaper levels. A good theatrical question would be: what can the theater do about it?

NIGHT-FEAR

The dogs are barking at the stranger,
a century high,
who strides at night across the orchards.
They leap at the fences,
desperate to worry his huge heels;
in vain they scratch at the backyard gate;
He walks away,
ducking his head to miss the moon.

DENIS KELLY.

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"BEATIFIC SIGNALS"

The Felicity of J. D. Salinger

by JOSEPHINE JACOBSEN

IN ONE OF his early stories, *De Daumier-Smith's Blue Period,* the major direction of the best of J. D. Salinger's work is foreshadowed—from Holden Caulfield's query to the taxi driver about the winter refuge of the Central Park ducks, to Zooey's blurted confession that he doesn't even feel like going down town to *lunch* with someone any more unless he thinks there's a good chance it's going to turn out to be Jesus . . . or the Buddha. It is difficult, and perhaps indefensible, to tear them from their organic places, but so important do they seem as an indication of how consistently Salinger has seen the way of his own growth, that it will be risked.

". . . As I was returning . . . after dark, I stopped on the sidewalk and looked into the lighted display window of the orthopedic appliances shop. Then something altogether hideous happened. The thought was forced on me that no matter how coolly or sensibly or gracefully I might one day learn to live my life, I would always, at best, be a visitor in a garden of enamel urinals and bedpans, with a sightless, wooden dummy-deity standing by in a marked-down rupture truss. The thought, certainly, couldn't have been endurable for more than a few seconds."

The writer of this passage has exterminated any facile approach to joy. This vision, in the shop window, is of the world in which Samuel Beckett's prose moves, with a differing but equal horror; it is the world made familiar to us by the best of the literature of despair, which, in its turn, comprises most of our best contemporary writing. And it is this first passage which commands respect for the second—the note of felicity which is Salinger's deepest and rarest gift to us:

". . . In the nine o'clock twilight . . . there was a light on in the orthopedic appliances shop. I was startled to see a live person in the showcase, a hefty girl of about thirty, in a green, yellow and lavender chiffon dress. She was changing the truss on the wooden dummy . . . I stood watching her, fascinated, till suddenly she sensed, then saw, that she was being watched. I quickly smiled, to show her that this was a non-hostile figure beyond the window-panes, but it did no good. The girl's confusion was out of all normal proportion. She blushed, she dropped the removed truss, she stepped back on a stack of irrigation basins —and her feet went out from under her. I reached out to her, instantly, hitting the tips of my fingers on the glass. She landed heavily on her bottom, like a skater. She immediately got to her feet without looking at me. Her face still flushed, she pushed her hair back with one hand, and resumed lacing up the truss on the dummy. It was just then that I had my Experience. Suddenly . . . the sun came up and sped toward the bridge of my nose at the rate of ninety-three million miles a second. Blinded and very frightened, I had to put my hand on the glass to keep my balance. The thing lasted for no more than a few seconds. When I got my sight back the girl had gone from the window, leaving behind her a shimmering field of exquisite, twice-blessed enamel flowers."

SALINGER has struck his note. The sordid, soulless, hopeless, pointless has been fractured by the force of the delicate, irresistible infusion: the human exchange of beatific signals. The grotesquely clad, grotesquely occupied girl, separated from the watching boy by every barrier conceivable, has brought down upon him the bolt of revelation. But this moment sternly satisfies the mind. This is no maudlin positive-thinking about trusses and ugliness. Nor is it sentimental evasion. The sordidness, in this moment, is not compromised with; it is destroyed.

"I am . . ." says Salinger's protagonist, Buddy Glass, "unjolly, unmerry, to the marrow, but my afflatus seems to be puncture-proof." And Seymour, just before his marriage, writes in his diary, "Oh God, if I am anything by a clinical name I'm a kind of paranoic in reverse. I suspect people of plotting to make me happy. . ." He has written of the stigmata of joy: "I have scars on my hands from touching certain people. Once, in the park, when Franny was still in the carriage, I put my hand on the downey pate of her head and left it there too long. Another time . . . with Zooey during a spooky movie. He was about six or seven, and he went under the seat to avoid watching a scary scene. I put my hand on his head. Certain things, certain colors and textures of human hair leave permanent marks on me. . . ."

When the creator of characters as sensitive to suffering and forms of evil as are Salinger's can recur

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to the clear note of joy, and sustain it, something so rare in current literature has occurred that it had better be examined. And a beginning can be made by asking two questions.

First, why have the dominant forces of Salinger's work been by-passed with a nervous rush? Second, through what forms does his sense of joy express itself?

So far, public comment on Salinger's work is like the comments a panic-stricken, valiant Victorian-minded spinster might make in trying to discuss Dr. Kinsey's report without referring to sex. These critics are interested in Mr. Salinger's modulations of style, in his psychology, in his characterization, in the increasingly vertiginous path he has set himself; but their acknowledgment of the core of his work is absent. Even in *Franny* and *Zooey,* in which the author's own statement becomes explicit, if characteristic, the religious core is passed off as Salinger's method of proving his biographical or psychological point.

Detractors and admirers alike battle on grounds of a spectacular irrelevance. ("I do cavil," says Buddy ardently, "with . . . the current ruling intellectual aristocracy educated in one or another of the big public psychoanalytical schools. . . They're a peerage of tin ears.") Salinger's methods, his style, his course, certainly, are extraordinarily interesting; but they are interesting most of all—perhaps, in the last analysis, exclusively—in the framework of an objective followed with an organized and meticulously logical determination. That objective is the pursuit of wisdom, and its core is religious.

ONE OF the three most urgent preoccupations underlying the fable of the Glass family (the related stories by which the full stature of Salinger as a writer has been revealed), is that of incarnation; the revelation, through matter, of spirit. The urinals and bedpans, in the blinding sun of Bobby's revelation, became a field of beautiful and twice-blessed enamel flowers.

From here on the list grows: Esmé's watch, bringing sleep to a mind on the brink of disaster; the "perfectly innocent Blake lyric" pinned "like a poultice" to Sergeant X's shirt in the front lines; the little green clothbound book of the Pilgrim which rests on Franny's knees in the ladies' room at Sickler's; the use of Seymour's phone in Zooey's rescue of a floundering Franny; all these are the gift made flesh. This is the substructure of all the Glass stories, shading boundlessly, into Salinger's second foundation—the illusion of classification.

Here again, the development is not random. Teddy says, at first, he would not have children told how an elephant is big, or grass green, but learn the classification after experiencing the substance. This is perfected and clarified when the four-year-old girl who tells Buddy she has two boy friends, answers his "What are their names?" with "Bobby and Dorothy"; more overtly, in Zooey's childhood comment on the identical houses in indistinguishable streets: "Zooey said they are 'nice.' He said you'd keep thinking everyone you met was your wife or your mother or father, and people would always be throwing their arms around each other wherever they went and it would look 'very nice.' " The unity essence projected through the distinction in persons.

One of Salinger's special gifts is the juxtaposition of the august and the trivial, in which the latter never deflates the former, but is instead mysteriously infused by it, while never losing its own nature. The vaudevillian's bicycle, the boy's marble, the shoes shined for the Fat Lady, expand and deepen before our eyes, suddenly congruous. These intimate and unevident relationships are an integral part of the way in which Salinger thinks and writes.

THE THIRD foundation of Salinger's work is poetry. A brief, elliptical glimpse of his view of poetry is dropped, as though accidentally, in Seymour's depressed, exalted, quasi-affectionate description of his unnerving mother-in-law to be. He marvels at her courage. She goes here and there, does this and that, when, he says, she might as well be dead. And what is Seymour's analysis of a person who might as well be dead? "A person deprived for life of any understanding or taste for the main current of poetry which flows through things, all things."

Salinger's preoccupation with poetry is intense. "They," Buddy says, "couldn't see Seymour for what he was—a poet, for God's sake." (And here the dependent phrase is not accidental). "And I mean a poet." "I know this much is all," Franny says. "If you're a poet, you do something beautiful. I mean you're supposed to *leave* something beautiful after you get off the page and everything."

Seymour, the poet, is aware that the path of poetry may cut across another path and veer away in its passage. Seymour sees poetry as at once a manner of life, and a crisis, ". . . and poetry surely is a crisis, perhaps the only actionable one we can call our own."

On these bases—matter as incarnation of spirit; the unity of essence, secret under its distinctions; and poetry as an implacable, demanding kind of wisdom—Salinger constructs the dignity of his joy. It is this dignity which is essential—that it be not a substitute, cheap, spurious, full of false claims and lies, but instead, the pure essence which has nothing to do with satisfactions, content, or even the presence of sorrow; invulnerable to the event. "My afflatus seems to be puncture-proof."

IT IS A joy based on gratitude, and that gratitude demands the incarnation, essence and poetry for

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its justification. It is a joy skillfully and inevitably clothed in contemporaneity, as our despair has been clothed in contemporaneity. This is one of the things which has made Salinger's core difficult. The thought, speech, clothes, setting, the very skin and bones of his people, are passionately of a time, of a moment—a time and moment in which their timelessness and universal energy is released. Zooey *had* to be a television actor, to use mid-century idiom, to live in a New York apartment in *order* to say, "Not that anyone's interested, but I can't even sit down to a goddam *meal,* to this day, without saying the Four Great Vows under my breath. . . . My God, I've been mumbling that under my breath three meals a day every day of my life since I was ten. I can't *eat* unless I say it. I tried skipping it once, when I was having lunch with LeSage. I gagged on a goddam cherrystone clam doing it."

The theme of gratitude recurs. Zooey struggling not to make a mis-step, during Franny's crisis, argues with his mother and himself: "For a psychoanalyst to be any good with Franny at all, he'd have to be a pretty peculiar type. I don't know. He'd have to believe that it's through the grace of God that he has the native intelligence to be able to help his goddam patients at *all.* . . . if she got somebody . . . who didn't even have any crazy, mysterious, *grat*itude for his insight and intelligence—she'd come out of an analysis in even worse shape than Seymour did. . . ."

The student of Salinger's work receives a gift—a gift which he may or may not value or decide to accept. In order to hear Salinger, there must be more suspension of disbelief than has often been accorded him. He himself has shown his consciousness of this in his prefatory remarks on Seymour: those who are unwilling or unable to listen, can get off here. Those who accept his offering will, in turn and inevitably, offer gratitude.

A JIM CROW PRODUCTION

Segregated Shakespeare

by N. BRYLLION FAGIN

HOW DOES one teach drama—even Shakespeare—to a group of college students who have never been permitted to see a live production of any play?

Last year, upon my retirement from the Johns Hopkins University—where besides teaching English I also directed a very busy academic theater—I was asked by the John Hay Whitney Foundation to go down to Memphis, Tennessee, to lend a hand to a greatly understaffed English department in a small Negro college. One of the duties assigned to me by LeMoyne College was to conduct a seminar in Shakespeare: the assignment proved challenging and educational in many ways.

I found the students eager, intelligent and hard-working, but poorly prepared in both general information and, especially, in their knowledge of dramatic literature. The Negro high schools in Memphis are overcrowded, poorly equipped with library facilities and materials, and staffed by underpaid, under-educated drudges. They draw most of their teachers from the graduates of LeMoyne College, but the Negro population of Memphis is growing at a rate with which the poverty-stricken LeMoyne—the only senior college for Negroes in West Tennessee—cannot possibly keep pace. The schools are obliged to recruit teachers in neighboring Arkansas and Mississippi, and the qualifications of many of these teachers are even more dubious than those of the Memphians.

At any rate, the drama, either as a living art or as a form of literature which derives its vitality from that living art, is a stranger to the vast majority of Negro school teachers in Memphis and consequently to their charges. They try to stage little plays in the schools, but these are either of the Sunday School mumming variety or amateur versions of Sis Hopkins folkdrama. Of course, all high schools teach some of the plays of Shakespeare, but for the Negro teacher and pupil they can be only words, words, words—beautiful words to be sure, but still only words on the pages of a book. How these words have resounded in the theaters of the world for over three and a half centuries they can have no inkling.

How then convey to the eager, intelligent young minds in my classroom the true relationship between theater and script, between finished performance and

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libretto, between words printed on paper and their sound in the enchanted palace of a theater when spoken by the cultivated voices of a Burbage, an Ellen Terry, an Olivier, a Gielgud, or a Margaret Leighton? I could, of course, lecture—the resort of all bad teachers—in an attempt to "paint" the atmosphere of a theater, its color and motion, its air of anticipation, moments of breathlessness and exultation, of shared mirth and terror and pity and release. And I could assign readings in histories of the theater and expatiate on the illustrations.

BUT I had a better idea. I asked my class to go to the Memphis public library and borrow a recording of T. S. Eliot's "The Cocktail Party," which many members of my class had read in another course during the first term. They could play it on their phonographs at their leisure, or gather in the homes of those that had phonographs, and thus they could at least hear the tempo, tone-color, enunciation and pronunciation of great actors.

Back they came to report. Yes, the Memphis public library had the recording, but it was not being circulated on the "Colored" side of the library. Noticing my surprise, one student assured me, "Why, there are lots of books and records in the library that we can't get." And that was my first actual experience of the meaninglessness of the high-sounding phrase "separate but equal." Later I learned that a case against the city library authorities has been pending in the courts of Tennessee for three years; whether it will ever come to trial is still problematical.

Twice more I was to come up against a blank wall of discrimination, prejudice and fear in my attempt to help my class at LeMoyne. The week my students were reading and discussing Shakespeare's "Henry V," the Guild, a small movie house which imports foreign films, was showing "Henry V" with Laurence Olivier. I was especially eager to get permission for my twelve students to see this film because it recaptures a production of Shakespeare's play at the Globe theater. The manager of the Guild, with whom I spoke over the telephone, was sympathetic but firm. What I wanted him to do could not be done. It wasn't a question of integration, since all I asked was that twelve seats be set aside in any part of the house at any performance. But, of course, even that would mean for the manager or owner to stick his neck out, and I could not expect him to do that.

But I did expect somebody at Memphis State University to stick his neck out when "King Lear" was produced by the University's drama department. After all, M.S.U. is a state-supported institution.

This time I went about it in a somewhat more subtle way. I asked the chaplain of LeMoyne College to ask the chaplain of M.S.U.—with whom he had cooperated on some past occasions on religious and communal matters—to intercede with the powers that be, in the hope that arrangements might be made to admit my class to a performance of "Lear." I also called a member of the English faculty at M.S.U., whom I had met socially, and who had impressed me as a liberal-minded and decent person, to see what he could do. The answer in both cases was a positive No. Negroes had never been admitted to the campus theater and therefore they could not—presumably ever—be admitted. And that was that.

Of course, if LeMoyne were not such a poor little college it could buy all the recordings it needs, rent such films as "Henry V," and build a good department of drama of its own. That might be helpful to the students, but it would not improve race relations in Memphis. It would merely confirm the public library and the state university in their illegal practices.

WHAT the Negro student is capable of doing on his own, even in the restricted field of academic theater, I found out toward the end of my year at LeMoyne. I decided to produce with members of my class Shaw's one-acter "The Dark Lady of the Sonnets." The members of my cast, like most LeMoyne students, had to work after school in order to earn their tuition ($330 a year) and had no time to spare for rehearsals. We wedged in a rehearsal now and then between classes or during the lunch period. Yet when we finally put the play on for a school assembly, sans costumes, lights, make-up and stage, all the players were letter-perfect, and Shaw's wit and eloquence thrilled and delighted both the audience and the players. Shakespeare and Elizabeth and the Lady-in-Waiting and the Beefeater were, to be sure, recognizable Memphis teenagers, but they were also characters who had an unmistakable Elizabethan air and flavor about them.

At this writing I am informed that one of my students—the girl who played Queen Elizabeth—spent a pleasant and profitable summer at Brandeis University studying the drama on a scholarship (LeMoyne staked her to the transportation costs), that another one is now in the graduate school at the University of Michigan (also on a scholarship), and that still another one is studying English on a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship at Boston University.

What is more important, at this writing I also note by the newspapers that Memphis State University has finally yielded to the mandates of the courts and has admitted eight Negro freshmen. Whether they will also be admitted to all the privileges of "white" students—including that of attendance at performances of the campus theater—remains to be seen. Nevertheless, it is reassuring to know that the mills of justice—even in the Deep South—do grind, albeit very slowly.

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INTELLECTUALS AND THE CHURCH—I

AMERICAN Catholics are not neatly divided between pro- and anti-intellectuals, if only because most people in the Church, like most people in the nation, are sublimely indifferent to the whole question. But among those who care, there is a sharp difference of opinion about just what the role of the Catholic "intellectual" should be. (I use the quotation marks because the word itself has a foreign flavor to it.) And if one may import two more classifications requiring apologetic punctuation, "liberal" and "integralist" Catholic intellectuals, while they share a common regard for human intelligence, differ sharply about how to approach the modern world.

The integralist, with whom I am concerned here, tends to think of his religion not only as a body of belief about God and man but as a full-blown culture. In its American setting this culture is limited and constrained by the minority status of the Church; its vigor, alas, is constantly threatened by hostile winds—positivism, secular humanism, rationalism, Science and Liberalism writ large: all the causes and isms which thrive in our pluralistic nation. But the role of the Catholic intellectual is clear. It is his duty to keep green the memory of the integrated culture of the Catholic ages, to combat the chaotic forces that have replaced it, and to sustain what little of it remains by making specifically "Catholic" contributions to philosophy, literature, the arts, criticism, pedagogy, etc.

Concretely, that means the integralist usually puts tremendous emphasis on the medieval contribution to the life of the West (the "Thirteenth, Greatest of Centuries" sort of thing); he is disposed to downgrade contributions coming from alien and heretical sources (progressive education, for instance, or depth psychology); and he vigorously supports the sectarian versions of popular culture which thrive in the American Catholics' self-imposed ghetto (Catholic book-of-the-month clubs, Catholic academic societies, professional guilds, and the like).

The integralist builds his dreams for an unlikely future on his Catholic memory of an idealized past. At his attractive best, the integralist is a shameless romantic, with a Chestertonian appreciation for the beauties of orthodoxy. The ugliness of modern life, the tinniness of popular culture and shallowness of so much contemporary thought strike him as the natural fruit of wicked seed. But like the rollicking Chesterton, he is always ready to come to the aid of beleaguered truth, and he usually does so with stout heart and good cheer.

If the word "intellectual" means what I think it does, the romantic integralist qualifies superbly. He is often steeped in the learning of the older Catholic culture and exquisitely trained in the classic disciplines. He is not, however, "engaged" in the turbulent intellectual life of his own time, and indeed he sees no reason why he should be, for in the quiet possession of his Catholic certitudes he fancies himself a man safely on the shore watching, with pity and a touch of gentle contempt, the frantic struggles of those who, by following after the foolish winds of intellectual fashion, have let themselves be carried out to sea.

I speak here of the romantic integralist. There is another variety among American Catholics, whose number I fear may be larger. He is an unhappy, embittered man for whom orthodoxy has turned out to be a straitjacket. He is not so much enamored of the past as he is angry with this brutal present that imprisons him in heterodox captivity. His only relationship to the foolish world "out there" is established when he hurls anathemas on its folly, and his bitterness is only more soured when the naughty world pays him no heed. The faith of the bitter integralist, which he wears like a six-shooter, is ever more evident than either his hope or his charity. Outside the household of the Faith, he sees nothing of value or truth; all is black and, if anything, the future promises to be even darker; error has no lights.

Again, if the word means what I think it does, the bitter integralist is almost aggressively anti-intellectual, at least in the sense that he hates and despises the results of contemporary thought. He considers this attitude of his a reasonable, even a "Christian" state of mind, for did not every perverse idea that helped put the world awry have its beginning in the wayward mind of some wayward intellectual?

Between the romantic integralist and the modern intellectual there is a world of difference. A difference not only in their thinking but—and this is probably more important—a difference in their mode of thought have made them intellectual strangers, and for all our brave talk of "dialogue" that strangeness is crucial. But the unknown foreigner is not necessarily hostile. Charity (or what the modern man may prefer to call tolerance) can bridge the gap between them.

Between the bitter integralist and the modern intellectual, however, there's a great gulf forever fixed. Each recognizes the other as the eternal enemy. But they who can agree on practically nothing, oddly enough, or maybe not so oddly, are of one mind about the "liberal" Catholic. Each sees the "liberal" as an anomaly. Neither completely trusts him, for his very existence belies their separate understandings of the Catholic Thing.

JOHN COGLEY.

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THE SCREEN

CRIMINALS ALL

ONE PROBLEM which often confronts makers of crime movies, besides building suspense and having to prove eventually that crime doesn't pay, is how to arouse audience sympathy for and interest in characters who don't really merit this attention. Sometimes this is done by introducing a good character with whom the viewer can identify himself—like the policeman in "Al Capone." Sometimes this sympathy is worked up for one of the crooks who is a little better than the others and who is forced by circumstances into crime—like the bank robber played by Harry Belafonte in "Odds Against Tomorrow." And sometimes interest is sustained through a very exciting plot and effective movie making—as with the French "Rififi."

Following the "Rififi" pattern is "Seven Thieves," an American film without any admirable characters but with interest and suspense that grip the viewer almost as much as if he cared about any of the seven involved. Sydney Boehm, who gave "Seven Thieves" its good production, with an outstanding cast and stunning photography of the French Riviera, also wrote the lively script (from Max Catto's novel, *Lions at the Kill)* about the planning and execution of a daring robbery of four million dollars worth of francs from the Monte Carlo casino.

At the film's beginning, Edward G. Robinson, as the master mind of the fantastic scheme, has already lined up five oddly assorted assistants: Joan Collins as an entertainer whose risqué dance draws patrons to the cheap night club where she works; Eli Wallach as her saxophonist and mentor; Alexander Scourby as the casino director's assistant who is drawn into the scheme by Joan; Michael Dante as an expert safe-cracker; Berry Kroeger as a mechanic and muscle man. Wisely, Robinson doesn't really trust any of them; so he works on Rod Steiger, as an experienced crook, to join the group; and Steiger agrees to work with them if he'll be in charge.

So skillfully is the first part of "Seven Thieves" done, with its outline of the plan, the careful preparations and even a full-dress rehearsal at the casino, that the second part, during which we see what actually happens, builds up a suspense that is almost unbearable —all this in spite of the fact that we have no warmth for any of the people involved and the ending wallows in sentiment that is out of keeping with the rest of the film's realism. Expertly directed by Henry Hathaway, "Seven Thieves" is little more than a slick study in criminality, but as entertainment for adults it is fairly absorbing cinema fare.

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HOPING no doubt to duplicate the success of "Al Capone," which covered the man and his period with effective realism and social comment, the makers of "The Rise and Fall of Legs Diamond" have come up with a gangster picture about another man who was spawned in the violent twenties. Unfortunately the film fails to explain Legs; and it concentrates more on the man's obsessive ambition and determined rise to power than on how he got that way or on why society allowed him to get as far as he did. Under Budd Boetticher's direction, Ray Danton plays the role well, especially in the episodes depicting Diamond's ruthless use of people and his sadistic cruelty; but Danton's good looks and personal sense of humor gives the role a glamour that belies the character. Scriptwriter Joseph Landon was more interested in this vicious killer's rise than his fall; and, although the film has a proper gory crime-does-not-pay finale, its total effect is more on the sensational side than the sociological. The picture will doubtlessly appeal more to thrill-seekers than to audiences interested in learning what makes a bad man tick—or shoot.

NOT ALL wrongdoers are thieves or gangsters; and if it's the purpose of "The Bramble Bush" to show that many of the ordinary people in a small New England town are sinners far worse than the publicized criminals, the picture succeeds with a bang. Adultery, blackmail, drunkenness, euthanasia, suicide, promiscuity and pre-marital sex are some of the subjects covered by "The Bramble Bush." Fortunately, some of this material is not visualized—but is discussed in the dialogue during the course of this lengthy film. Its cast try hard enough, but the talky script (made from Charles Mergendahl's novel) is too much for them; and the efforts of Richard Burton, James Dunn, Henry Jones, Barbara Rush, Angie Dickinson, Tom Drake, Jack Carson and the many others involved don't add up to very much. There is this to be said, though, about the characters who inhabit the town in "The Bramble Bush": they make the people in Peyton Place look like something out of Louisa May Alcott.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

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Washington, D. C.

TO THE EDITORS: Jerome Taylor's report on the program of Pastor Bertram and his department at Valparaiso University ["Religion in College," Jan. 29]

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BOOKS

FOR BROTHERHOOD

This *Books for Brotherhood* list includes books of general interest in the field of intergroup relations. The books are chosen from among the many published from October, 1958 through July, 1959. They were selected not for the information about any particular religious group but because they do most to promote understanding among various groups. The list is the result of unanimous agreement by a representative committee with wide experience in evaluating books, on their recommendations of the best in the field, for children, young people, and adults.

ELIZABETH D. NORRIS, Librarian
Paula K. Lazrus Memorial Library
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ADULT LIST

Selected by . . .

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J. OSCAR LEE, Director, Department of Racial and Cultural Relations, National Council of Churches.

DORIS VIACAVA, Reference Librarian, Iona College, New Rochelle, New York.

This selection from the complete list is presented by the publishers named below

ADULT LIST

The Bridge Is Love: Jottings from a Traveller's Notebook, by Hans Alfred de Boer. Eerdmans, $4.50

A stirring report on four years of travel through Africa and Asia by a dedicated and sincere Christian layman. Shocked by the race problem, the rise of nationalism and the mounting tension between Christianity and other religions, this author seeks to awaken the Western consciousness to a new understanding of responsibility. A challenging foreword is written by Martin Niemoller.

Exodus, by Leon Uris, Doubleday, $4.50.

Israelis, Europeans, Americans, Jews and Gentiles confront each other in the rawness of their human striving in this near to life account of yesterday's newspaper headlines. A masterful insight into the complex forces that led to the establishment of Israel makes this a best selling novel.

Faith and Understanding in America, by Gustave Weigel. Macmillan, $3.75.

A collection of essays whose general theme is faith and world order in contemporary society. Catholic-Protestant relations and the basic differences between the two faiths are discussed with the sympathy and understanding necessary for our ecumenically-minded time.

Friend to Friend: A Candid Exchange between Pearl S. Buck and Carlos P. Romulo. John Day, $2.50.

Understanding between Americans and the peoples of Asia can best be promoted by discovering the truth about ourselves and about each other — a more important requisite in East-West relations than technical efficiency.

The Heart is the Teacher, by Leonard Covello with Guido D'Agostino. McGraw-Hill, $4.75.

The biography of an immigrant boy, who, despite poverty, manages to attain a college education and become the principal of a high school in the heart of New York slums. Dr. Covello is convinced that the school and the community are irrevocably tied together, that "the struggle for a better world will be won or lost in our schools."

Image of America, by Raymond L. Bruckberger. Translated from the French by C. G. Paulding and Virgilia Peterson. Viking, $4.50.

A French Dominican priest, intellectual, artist, and fighter, Father Bruckberger here attempts to isolate and assess what is unique about America. The large measure of success which is his makes this book a lasting contribution to our self-knowledge.

Indians and Other Americans: Two Ways of Life Meet, by Harold E. Fey and D'Arcy McNickle. Harper, $3.75.

The problems and injustices which have been the lot of the Indian in this country are compassionately considered and meaningfully related to the attitudes of, in the authors' telling phrase, "other Americans."

It Has Happened Here, by Virgil T. Blossom, Harper, $2.95.

Little Rock's Superintendent of Schools during the fearful months of 1957 and 1958 describes how the School Board's carefully thought out plan to begin integration was wrecked by die-hard extremists. A moderate himself, the author urges a realistic and law-abiding approach . . .

Religion in America: Original Essays on Religion in a Free Society, edited by John Cogley. Meridian Books, $1.45.

This rich and varied collection of essays contains contributions from such noted thinkers as Rabbi Joshua Heschel, John Courtney Murray, S.J., Paul Tillich, Reinhold Niebuhr, Will Herberg, Gustave Weigel, S. J., and others . . .

What's Right With Race Relations, by Harriet Harmon Dexter. Harper, $4.00.

This book is one of the few in the field of race relations that takes a different approach to the problem. It gives a heartening account of what has been done in overcoming racial injustice in many areas of life in this country . . . reveals the active commitment of thousands of people . . .

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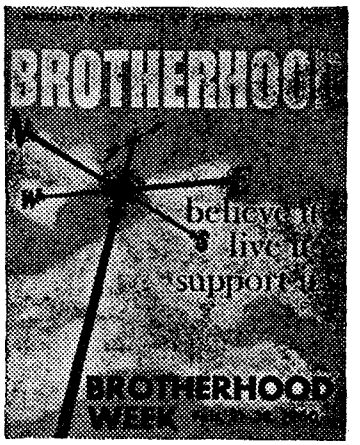

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The National Conference of Christians and Jews, 43 W. 57th St., New York 19, N.Y.

CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIST

Charley Starts from Scratch, by Jesse Jackson. Harper, $2.50. 10-14.

In this sequel to **Call Me Charley** and **Anchor Man,** Charley goes to Atlantic City where, despite racial prejudice, he gets a job on the Boardwalk, makes new friends, and wins first place at the Olympic trials.

Family under the Bridge, by Natalie Savage Carlson. Harper, $2.95. 8-10.

The cameraderie of the French dispossessed: a family of children without a home befriend an old hobo and regenerate him by their love and faith in him.

Flight to Freedom: The Story of the Underground Railroad, by Henrietta Buckmaster. Crowell, $3.00. 12-15.

A lively account of the escape of Negro slaves, by way of the Underground Railroad, told through the lives of men and women who were a part of the abolitionist movement.

John Greenleaf Whittier: Fighting Quaker, by Ruth Langland Holberg, Crowell, $2.75. 11-14.

The beloved American poet and his courageous fight against slavery are presented in a stirring biography suitable for younger readers.

Kalena, by Esma Rideout Booth. Longmans, $3.00. 12-16.

A young girl decides about her future in this story of changing Africa. There is a marked similarity between the problems and aspirations of these young Africans and young people everywhere.

The Long Way Home, by Margot Benary-Isbert. Harcourt, $3.00. 12-14.

Christoph Wegener, a German war-orphan, has occasion to observe and evaluate many types of people from several different environments, before he finally wins complete acceptance in the family of his American foster-father.

Nkwala, by Edith Lambert Sharp. Little, Brown, $3.00. 9-12.

A boy's coming to manhood during his tribe's time of wandering in search of more fertile ground reveals the spiritual core of Indian life, and its deep dignity.

Secret of the Samurai Sword, by Phyllis A. Whitney. Westminster, $2.95. 12-16.

In a thoughtful and sensitive story, a Nisei girl's effort to acclimatize herself to her parent's native Japan is seen through the eyes of a visiting American girl. Notable in this good mystery is a discussion of Hiroshima by the American girl and a Japanese boy.

They Stand Invincible: Men Who Are Reshaping Our World, by Robert Merrill Bartlett. Crowell, $3.50. 12-16.

A collection of short biographies which includes such men as Albert Schweitzer, Toyohiko Kagama, Martin Luther King, Jr., and others who are devoting their lives to counteracting poverty, prejudice, ignorance, and violence.

Willa, by Ruth Franchere. Crowell, $3.00. 10-14.

Ten year old Willa Cather, in her new home on the Nebraska plains, has the whole world opened to her by the Bohemian, Swedish and German immigrants who are her neighbors.

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was a welcome contribution to current discussion of this question. I thought immediately of *The Liturgical Renaissance in the Roman Catholic Church* by Ernest B. Koenker (who published his study from the same city in 1954), in which the thesis is maintained that full-blown sacramental participation by the laity has no natural home in the Church of Rome but is supported only by a liberal wing within her which is allied to the Reform at heart. I scrutinized the article with care but the only spirit it breathed was that of one who "loves our nation and has built us a synagogue."

The article impelled me to look up a half-remembered reference, in which Pope Pius XII said to an Interamerican Congress of educators at La Paz, Bolivia, that, "religious education holds by strict right a place of honor in the programs of universities and centers of higher learning. See to it that there go in strict unity with these studies a holy fear of God, the custom of recollected prayer, and full and conscious participation in the spirit of the liturgical Year of Holy Mother Church, the source of unspeakable graces." (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis,* XL [1948], 466.) It is along this line that the study group on liturgy in the college at the last three Liturgical Weeks has been proceeding. The one at Notre Dame (1959) had the greatest success to date, it seemed, in setting the academic study of theology in a context of the worship life of the college. The Society of Catholic College Teachers of Sacred Doctrine which will hold its sixth annual meeting in Chicago in Easter Week has not yet attacked the problem formally. This has been in part owing to strenuous efforts by this body to avoid a harmful confusion between the intellectual inquiry into faith and the demands of pastoral concern.

My own conviction is that the omission is at least as much the result of certain faulty categorizations of voluntarist and intellectualist tendencies, so called. It is easier to maintain that the classroom is no place for bad homilies than to examine the kind of theological concern which the Valparaiso experiment represents. The truth of the matter is that Catholic college teachers in the main have not been well enough trained theologically up to now to attempt any such synthesis —or in the Society's earlier years to discuss it profitably. This situation is being remedied from year to year by the improved theological opportunities available to its membership, clerics by no means the least.

The natural link between liturgy and life in formal college study is not to be found in courses in Scripture or sacramental theology only, but perhaps primarily in moral-ascetical studies ("virtues and states in life"), where the relation of the virtue of religion to the virtues of faith, hope and charity is of paramount importance. With correct principles of biblical interpretation and a firm analogy of faith to proceed on, nothing should hinder classroom scrutiny of the prayers and the act of worship, to see if it is accomplishing its purpose of making students new in Christ. To attempt anything of the sort without theology would surely be the death of it; not to attempt it will as surely be death to the religion which theology serves.

I might in closing note that the student sentiment, "the course is certainly not what I had imagined a religion course would be" (this comes after a weary session with American newspeak in examination booklets), provides an unexpected bond for ecumenical dialogue.

(Rev.) GERARD S. SLOYAN,
Head, Department of Religious Education,
The Catholic University of America.

Seeking Status?

SEE PAGE 609

CATHOLIC BOOK WEEK

February 21-27, 1960

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Critics' Choices for Catholic Book Week

PHILIP DEASY

BLAISE Pascal. By Ernest Mortimer. Harper. $5. In his introduction to the Everyman edition of the *Pensées* T. S. Eliot noted that Pascal "is one of those writers who will be and who must be studied afresh by men in every generation." Much more recently William Barrett in his *Irrational Man* wrote, "It is our world, the modern world, that Pascal depicts. . . ." Why Pascal must be studied afresh and how he depicts our twentieth century world is made admirably clear in Mr. Mortimer's study. He is especially perceptive in his reading of the *Pensées* and his penultimate chapter, "The Portrait of Man," consists almost entirely of extracts from that work.

The Devil's Advocate. By Morris L. West. William Morrow. $3.95. If you've been reading more Catholic novels lately but enjoying them less, try *The Devil's Advocate.* Nothing so clarifies discussion about the Catholic novel than the creation of a good one. Both from the viewpoint of craftsmanship and of art, *The Devil's Advocate* is that. Though the putative saint in the novel may be a bit too romantically conceived to be altogether credible, no such limitation mars Mr. West's portrayal of the real saint in *The Devil's Advocate.* That is the Advocate himself, sent from the legalistic offices of the Congregation of Rites in Rome into the warmer and more fully human Italian south. In his insights into the real nature of sanctity Mr. West reveals an acuity that is rare among non-European writers.

A Mirror of the Ministry in Modern Novels. By Horton Davies. Oxford. $3.75. Don't be misled by the dissertation sounding title of this book. Though the author is professor of religion at Princeton and a former Congregationalist minister, the heroes of his book are the three Catholic priests portrayed, respectively, in Bernanos's *Diary of a Country Priest,* Mauriac's *The Woman of the Pharisees* and Greene's *The Power and the Glory.* Mr. Davies' analysis of the three novels is masterly. He also makes clear, in his treatment of Cozzens's *Men and Brethren,* the difficulties of portraying the modern Protestant minister. Though issue can be taken with Mr. Davies on many literary and theological points, his book as a whole is a penetrating and interesting study.

The Business of Criticism. By Helen Gardner. Oxford. $3.50. Miss Gardner, the scholar-critic and Oxford University don, was recently the subject of a brief vignette in the *New Yorker.* American Catholic readers should find particularly interesting the section of this book entitled "The Limits of Literary Criticism," wherein Miss Gardner reveals her scholarly competence in interpreting the Scriptures. From the Old Testament there's "The Drunkenness of Noah"; from the New, "The Poetry of St. Mark." A later chapter further reveals her profound religious insights in her discussion of John Donne's sermons. Miss Gardner's comments also serve as a gentle corrective to another book that might be recommended for Catholic Book Week, Father Gerald Vann's *The Paradise Tree* (Sheed and Ward).

Literary Biography. By Leon Edel. Doubleday-Anchor. $.95. By literary biography Mr. Edel means the lives of writers. One of his major points, and here he differs from the purer New Critics, is that much can be learned about an author's life, particularly his inner life, from his writings. As illustration he analyzes several poems of our foremost religious poet, T. S. Eliot, and the novels of Willa Cather, particularly *The Professor's House.* Equally telling are Mr. Edel's comments about an essay of Henry James's on Emerson in which James noted regarding Emerson's three journeys to Europe: "There he could dwell with the ripe unconsciousness of evil," a condition, of course, into which James's own religious sense would never allow him to fall.

ANNE FREMANTLE

THE Phenomenon of Man. By Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. Harper. $5. Because all truth and all knowledge are ours, and the least trace of them should be pounced upon "as though we were starving" whenever and wherever we may find them, as St. Augustine says, Father Teilhard's book is the most nourishing that has appeared possibly this century. Here, scientifically set out, are the ideas adumbrated by such thinkers as Gustav Fechner in the nineteenth century, and Sir Jagadis Bose in the beginning of the twentieth.

The Devil's Advocate. By Morris West. Morrow. $3.95. This most Catholic and most courteous and civilized novel creates several unforgettable characters—the old English Monsignor, stricken with cancer and given an assignment in the Abruzzi, the woman who was forgiven much because she loved much, the pitiful parish priest. Here, set forth in simple, serviceable English, are courage and compassion of a high order.

Holy Writ or Holy Church. By George H. Tavard. Harper. $5. Distinguo, St. Thomas Aquinas kept repeating, and that single word is one of the most important in any language. Father Tavard, exploring the different approaches of Catholics and Protestants to one Book, does an excellently historical and scholarly job, and helps the ecumenical attitude to grow in all his readers.

After Nine Hundred Years. Yves Congar, O.P. Fordham. $4.50. Another ecumenical "must," this sober —and often agonizing—reappraisal of what separates (and what unites) Orthodox and Catholics, is both timely and truthful. No punches are pulled—if anything, the *mea culpas* occasionally are overly loud.

God's Frontier. Jose Descalzo. Knopf. $3.95. A touching, rather

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AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

by Sr. D. J. Van Hoogstrate

Realists and Idealists: A Catholic Interpretation, is the subtitle of this timely analysis of the pros and cons of political realism in the light of the principles of natural law, the pronouncements of the theologians and experts in international ethics. A scholarly but very readable analysis by the Dean of Webster College $6.25

FAITHFUL SERVANT

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The Retreat Notes and Letters of Blessed Claude La Colombiere, S. J., translated and edited by Fr. William J. Young, S. J. Companion volume to the life of Blessed Claude (Perfect Friend) by Georges Guitton, S. J., also translated by Father Young. $6.50

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horrifying, novel about a young layman who finds, to his distress, that God works miracles through him. The miracles are "absurd" in Camus' sense, for God's ways are not ours, and His poor servant finds, as the great St. Teresa did, that the reason He has so few friends is that He treats them so badly. A beautifully written novel, arid, monochromatic, like a landscape in the Spain from which it comes, but with a really clear intensity in the writing and the thinking.

GEORGE G. HIGGINS

THE Hidden Face—The Life of Therese of Lisieux. By Ida F. Gorres. Pantheon. $4.95. This is modern hagiography at its very best—by all odds the most satisfactory life of a saint I have ever read. The author reveals (possibly for the first time) "the hidden face of the Church, the Face of the hidden Church" behind the girlish countenance of Therese and (certainly for the first time, so far as this reviewer is concerned) makes it possible to understand how this delicate slip of a bourgeois girl who attended school for only five years and had practically no contact whatsoever with the outside world became the first saint "in 300 years . . . to show a 'way of perfection' that could be followed by the layman" of whatever degree of learning and of whatever occupation or profession.

Science, Religion and Christianity. By Hans Urs von Balthasar. Newman. $3.50. I take it that this is the sort of book John Cogley and others have in mind when they call upon the theologians to venture into the muddy waters of contemporary conditions and to relate the truths of revelation more meaningfully to the ambiguities of life in a constantly changing world. In any event, it's a great book but, frankly, one that cannot be fully digested in less than two or three careful readings. The author admits that the waters of the modern world are theologically muddy, but "one might say," he concludes, "that the beginning of a spring of Christian hope is the mark of contemporary Christianity." The involved but extremely cogent reasoning which leads him to this optimistic conclusion makes for exciting theological reading.

Msgr. Ronald Knox. By Evelyn Waugh. Little, Brown. $5. Some reviewers in England as well as the United States contend that Waugh has exaggerated the real or alleged difficulties and frustrations which Msgr. Knox experienced as a convert to Catholicism. I wouldn't know about that. All I can say is that Mr. Waugh's affectionate portrait of the lovable and incredibly talented and versatile Ronald Knox will do very well until a more definitive biography comes along. I might add that, like almost every other book that Waugh has ever written, this one is a joy to read.

Image of America. By R. L. Bruckberger. Viking. $4.50. If Father Bruckberger's sympathetic and highly original analysis of the American experience is too favorable to the United States, as some reviewers have complained, that's just fine and dandy so far as I am concerned. After all, it was about time for another Frenchman—and preferably one who has lived in the United States for a number of years—to take the propaganda ball away from Mauriac. Furthermore Father Bruckberger is not by any means blindly uncritical of the United States. He obviously admires the American experiment, but at the same time he is frank enough to warn us as a friendly critic that time is running out on us and that we owe it to the rest of the world as well as to ourselves to make a good examination of our national conscience.

The Image Industries. By William Lynch, S.J. Sheed and Ward. $3.50. The Responsibility of the Artist. By Jacques Maritain. Scribner's. $2.95. These two books, which have enough in common to warrant their being listed as one, are probably over-priced, but for those who are interested in the ever-shifting problem of art and prudence they are literally indispensable. Indeed anyone who in the future presumes to write on this subject—and, more specifically, on the problem of censorship—without first having

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mastered Lynch and Maritain should be written off as a charlatan. That goes for the editors of Catholic as well as secular periodicals, for movie and television critics, and, last but not least, for Paul Blanshard and for all the officers, members and hangers-on of the American Civil Liberties Union.

SISTER MARIS STELLA

RONALD Knox. By Evelyn Waugh. Little, Brown. $5. According to the author, this book is merely an account of external events, but it is much more. In his careful handling, the brilliance and charm of a lovable as well as great person comes clearly to the reader. One feels that the distinguished subject would not be embarrassed by the details which his biographer has seen fit to include. Beginning with a chapter on the heredity of Ronald Knox, Mr. Waugh carefully traces the happy effects of family background, early good training, and excellent education on a highly gifted child who, in spite of dismal predictions to the contrary at the time of his conversion to Roman Catholicism, fulfilled the promise of his youth. Much time is devoted to the great work of his life: the translation of the Bible which was not without trials and frustrations. But without this element, one supposes, the life of this great Christian would have been incomplete. And it is anything but that. Many personal details and anecdotes enrich a narrative portrait in which the style and tone seem to be exactly right.

Science, Religion and Christianity. By Hans Urs von Balthasar. Newman. $3.50. Doctor Urs von Balthasar, with profound learning and insight traces through Western thought man's gradual loss of a philosophy of life that embraces at once science and religion. Of particular interest are the chapters treating modern literary artists. The author neither underestimates the genuineness of their search for truth nor their anguish as seekers. He offers no easy solution. Only religion pure and undefiled, universal in scope, intelligent in assessment

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It Is Paul Who Writes. By Ronald Knox and Ronald Cox. Sheed & Ward. $4.50. Father Cox has put the Pauline letters where they belong in the chronological acts of the apostles. With the Knox translations of the Acts and Letters on one page and the illuminating comments of Father Cox on the page opposite, the common reader is greatly helped in his attempt to grasp the entirety of Saint Paul's boundless missionary zeal, his tireless activity, his trials and human response to them, and his relation to the other great figures of the apostolic age.

Testament and Other Poems. By John Fandel. Sheed & Ward. $.95. A first book of poems is an occasion for any poet. This one is a particularly happy one for the reader. John Fandel appears to have found his own idiom. He is so original as not to have assumed a manner. He is also very intelligent, but what he writes is poetry, not academic exercise. He seems to be unaffected by any of his contemporaries, yet his poetry is highly contemporary. Sheed & Ward are to be thanked for having published it in a book which fits neatly into hand and pocket.

Time Walked. By Vera Panova. Arlington Books Inc. Cambridge. $3.50. A popular Soviet novelist, Vera Panova presents the situation and events of her story through the consciousness of a very small boy, maintaining his viewpoint skillfully throughout the book. Since Serioja is a lovable, normal child with an unspoiled sense of wonder, the book is charming, perhaps even a classic. Anyone accustomed to the older Russian novels, however, may notice a vacuum where religion should have been. Aunt Pasha and the beggar are the only characters who still cling to it.

Four Stories. By Sigrid Undset. Knopf. $3.75. The setting of these stories is modern Christiania. The characters involved are people whose lives are, for various reasons, unfulfilled. Two are middle-

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aged spinsters who long hopelessly for marriage. Simonsen is a muddling, pitiful old man whose daughter-in-law is ashamed of him. Helene in "Thjodolf" is unable to have a child of her own and lacks the understanding and love to make her marriage happy. All four are unlovely people lost in a world which offers no better guideposts than security, respectability and a sense of possession.

LEONARD F. X. MAYHEW

THE Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism. Edited by Henri Daniel-Rops. Hawthorn. $2.95 per volume. The distinguished name of scholar Daniel-Rops would be enough to attract serious attention to this monumental enterprise to be completed in 150 volumes, of which thirty-four have appeared to date. Each volume addresses itself to a specific subject in one of the fifteen subseries which range through dogmatic and moral theology, history, liturgy, Scripture and comparative religion. The authors attempt to give scientifically accurate explanations without becoming overly technical, consciously aiming themselves at the educated and informed layman. All the writers are French and include some of the most familiar names in the contemporary French Catholic intellectual renaissance. The series answers a need of American Catholics and marks out a path for future native efforts to avoid both the condescension of too many "Theology For Laymen" type works and the cluttering detail which makes solid Church studies unattractive for all but specialists.

American Catholics: A Protestant-Jewish View. Edited by Philip Scharper. Sheed & Ward. $3.75. "Oh wad some Power the giftie gie us/To see oursels as ithers see us!" This small volume is a landmark in American Catholic life. Six informed non-Catholics—four Protestant and two Jewish—have written honest and incisive analyses of the cultural, religious and social image presented by the Catholic Church in the U.S. to those outside its ranks. Father Gustave Weigel, S.J., has added an "Afterword" of appreciation and summary. The non-Catholic authors have written in a spirit of charity and constructive analysis and criticism. The result, in the words of Dr. Martin E. Marty, a Lutheran, is "a plea for dialogue which grows out of commitment and loyalty." The outstanding contribution, in my opinion, comes from Dr. Robert McAfee Brown of Union Theological Seminary. Dr. Brown has a clear and complete appreciation of the enormous difference between the issues which divide us superficially (censorship, power politics, etc.) and the deepdown theological disagreements which make us what we are and which underlie basic Protestant-Catholic tension. These divergences must be faced and discussed honestly and openly by all who are sincerely interested in Christian unity as well as in strengthening the fabric of American society. He examines not only

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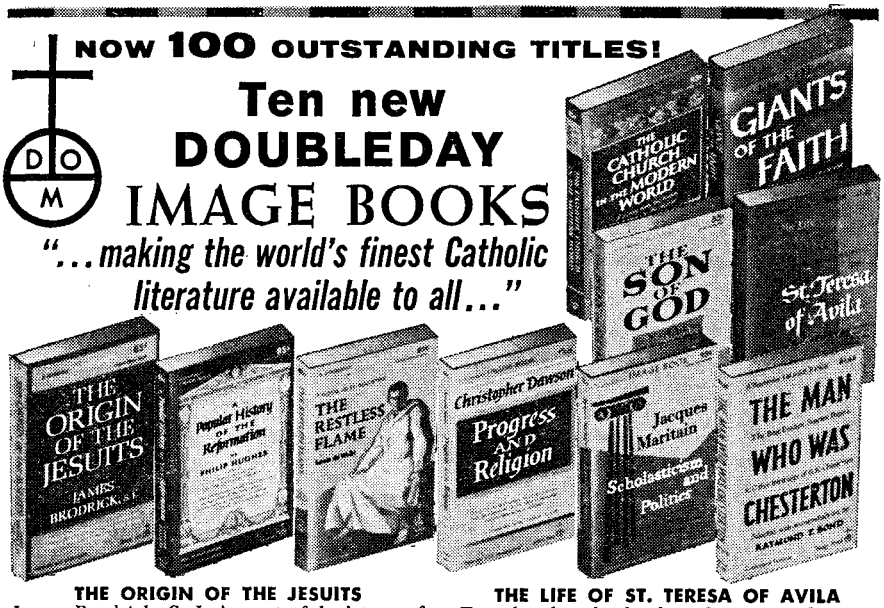

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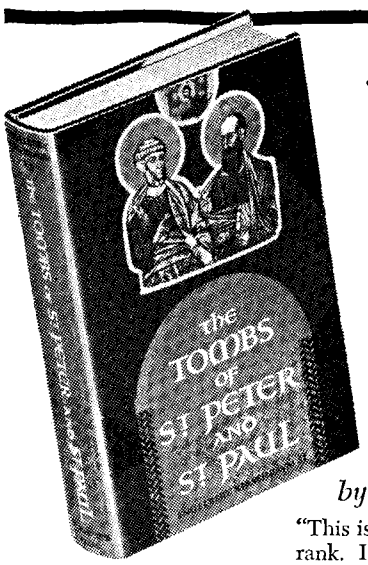

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to try it. One way to ease matters a little is for the reader to start where he will, for instance with Marx's atheism, or James' theism, or Pascal's way of the heart. Some years ago a question asked in final comprehensive exams in "Greats" at Oxford University was whether there is a satisfactory treatment of God in modern philosophy. Dr. Collins' students could reply better than any others we can imagine.

This is My God. By Herman Wouk. Doubleday. $3.95. Herman Wouk wants to express in his simple and almost racy language the God of orthodox Judaism. Naturally, every nation, and every person for that matter, has its god or gods and has appropriate ways of worshipping. As Locke said in his awkward way, anyone has to take some being or set of beings as at the peak of the universe, and, as Maritain has said about acknowledging the true God, to acknowledge is already to worship. Wouk grants that Judaism looks odd: like a web of taboos, and a ball-and-chain dragginess. But in his eyes the very survival of the Jewish people looks like a work of Providence. He believes in the law of Moses as the key to their survival, since "the Creator gave our folk the task of bearing witness to his moral law on earth." He insists that there is a mystery about this people.

The Phenomenon of Man. By Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. Harper. $5. We may well suggest that the publication of Teilhard's "man" was the publication event of the year in America and that we are more likely to be reading this work ten and twenty years from now than any other published in the last decade. Teilhard's reach is incredibly bold, all the way from matter in an inchoate form, almost "prime matter," to life and knowledge and man, and to Christ. The author is hopeful and constructive, his work full of a forward look, and though it does not take up the social question or the fear of being shelled by long-range missiles it seems to make more sense in a space-age and satellite world than anything else that has appeared. The common frightful notion that everything is

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The Graces of Ballykeen. By Una Troy. Dutton. $3.50. It is wonderful that among all the very good books this last year in the religious field there is this happy and gay book by Una Troy. The life of a whole community of people revolves around the not-too-fast-ebbing life of a centenarian, cared for by two nuns not much younger than herself. The two with their charge can sit it out, because a saint not long ago living in this house and now housed in heaven told them to do as much. So the Order of Grace and Reverend Mother herself have to make terms with the two; everybody does. These two, Peter and Paul, without trying have everybody twisted around their finger. In effect they are the village doctor, the school, the refugium peccatorum. The reader is in for a good time seeing Peter and Paul in action.

CRITICS

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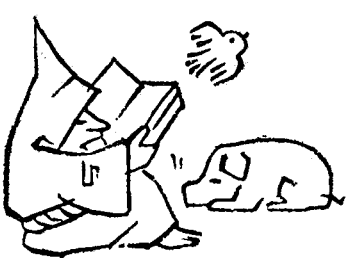

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